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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0432
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 5320
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0163
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ 5978
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3700
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DEPT PASS USAID TO LAC/RSD, LAC/SAM, G/ENV, PPC/ENV
TREASURY FOR USED IBRD AND IDB AND INTL/MDB
USDA FOR FOREST SERVICE: LIZ MAHEW
INTERIOR FOR DIR INT AFFAIRS: K WASHBURN
INTERIOR FOR FWS: TOM RILEY
INTERIOR FOR NPS: JONATHAN PUTNAM
INTERIOR PASS USGS FOR INTERNATIONAL: J WEAVER
JUSTICE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES: JWEBB
EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL: CAM HILL-MACON
USDA FOR ARS/INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH: G FLANLEY
NSF FOR INTERNATIONAL: HAROLD STOLBERG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [TBIO](#) [ECON](#) [SOCI](#) [XR](#) [BR](#)
SUBJECT: SOUTH AMERICA ESTH NEWS, NUMBER 107

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1. The following is the one-hundred-seventh in a series of newsletters, published by the Brasilia Regional Environmental Hub, covering environment, science and technology, and health news in South America. The information below was gathered from news sources from across the region, and the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Hub office or our constituent posts. Addressees who would like to receive a user-friendly email version of this newsletter should contact Larissa Stoner at stonerla@state.gov. The e-mail version also contains a calendar of

upcoming ESTH events in the region. NOTE: THE NEWSLETTER IS NOW ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE BRASILIA INTRANET PAGE, BY CLICKING ON THE 'HUB' LINK.

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Agriculture

[13. Argentina: Danger in the Fields](#)

FEB. 18, 2008 - The agriculture industry in Argentina is enjoying the boom in demand for soybeans and other commodities and the subsequent high prices, which are also fattening the state coffers. But the question of the unsafe handling of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers has basically been ignored amidst the collective euphoria. According to the Secretariat of Agriculture, the latest harvest set a new record of nearly 95 million tons of grains, half of which were soybeans. Private consultants estimate that 3.6 tons of fertilizers were used in 2007, 20 percent more than in 2006. And the growing demand has drawn major investments in fertilizer production plants run by local and international companies, which

indicates that output will continue to rise. A similar boom is seen

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in herbicide use, with glyphosate as the leading product, used to control weeds in the country's vast soybean fields. Experts recommend campaigns to inform people about the correct handling of such products and the risks they pose, as well as training, both for farmers and workers who use them and health professionals who must properly diagnose the symptoms of exposure to toxic agrochemicals.

Source - IPS News

14. Brazil Authorizes Genetically Modified Crops

FEB. 12, 2008 - Brazil's National Biosecurity Council has authorized the planting and sale of two types of genetically modified corn, angering some rural groups which consider these varieties environmentally risky. Science and Technology Minister Sergio Rezende said the decision by the 11 cabinet ministers making up the council "is the first approval for genetically modified corn in Brazil," according to the state news agency Agencia Brasil. One of the varieties authorized was a pest-resistant crop called MON 810 by its maker, the US biotech company Monsanto, and marketed under the names Guardian and YieldGard. Brazil has previously approved the use of two other genetically modified crops engineered by Monsanto. In 2005, an insect-resistant cotton called Bollgard Evento 531 was authorized, along with a herbicide-tolerant soybean known as RR.

Source - Yahoo

Health

15. Paraguay: Yellow Fever Update

FEB. 15, 2008 - As of February 15, there are 46 presumed cases of yellow fever in Paraguay. Twenty-six are live cases; only five cases have been confirmed to date. The first case of yellow fever surfaced January 15 in San Estanislao, San Pedro Department. A team of experts dispatched to the region found five more cases between January 17 and 30. A second team of experts from the Central Laboratory was dispatched to the region January 23 and found five more suspected cases. While the investigation is ongoing, preliminary indications are that the disease was spread by monkeys

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from Brazil into Paraguay. Health authorities confirmed five cases of yellow fever February 4. Since then, the virus spread to the suburbs of Asuncion and the number of suspected cases has doubled. The first urban case was reported in San Lorenzo, a suburb of Asuncion. Public fears of an epidemic are surging. Health Minister Oscar Martinez declared a national epidemiological alert February 8. Two days later, the Health Ministry announced that it had run out of vaccines. The shortage has created chaos in some communities and complicated the GOP's ability to manage the outbreak. On February 5, the day after the Health Ministry confirmed the presence of yellow fever, thousands of Paraguayans flooded health centers across the country for vaccines. Following 13,000 vaccinations, the Health Minister announced February 6 that its supply was almost depleted and that the remaining vaccines would be used in San Pedro. According to February 13 press reports, thousands of people residing in areas with confirmed cases of yellow fever were turned away from clinics when supplies were exhausted. Approximately 4,000 residents of San Lorenzo protested the lack of vaccines by blocking a major highway February 13.

Source - US Embassy Asuncion, ASUNCION 00000103;

Industrial Wastewater Pollution

16. Argentine Potassium Mining Plan Stirs Water Worry

FEB. 2008 - Scientists and some government officials are questioning plans for a massive potassium-chloride mine in Argentina's Mendoza province, arguing salt waste from the operation would harm water resources. The US\$900 million mine planned by the Anglo-Australian company Rio Tinto would be developed in the south of Mendoza near the Colorado River, which flows 600 miles (1,000 kms) through five provinces from the Andes to the Atlantic Ocean. Rio Tinto says it will extract potassium chloride, which is used mainly for fertilizer, by means of a chemical-free method called solution extraction. A prime question about the potassium plan has to do with waste. The company says that for every ton of potassium extracted, 1.21 tons of salt will be produced. The salt will not be sold on account of its scant economic value; instead, it will be deposited in piles three miles (5 kms) from the Colorado River. Experts worry

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that over time, the salt piles could represent a significant threat to downstream drinking water supplies.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

17. Venezuela: Photocatalysis Fights Water Contamination

FEB. 18, 2007 - Venezuela hopes to have ready this year the prototype of a lake decontamination system that uses solar rays to destroy the toxic substances in the water -- heterogeneous photocatalysis. "Water contaminants degrade with the increase in the speed of the chemical reaction between the compounds involved. The toxic organic molecules oxidize and generate ultra-pure water," Juan Matos, a chemist with the Venezuelan Institute of Scientific Research and leader of the project that also involves Cuba, told Tierramerica. While the Venezuelan experts will focus on the toxic chemicals, the Cubans will take on the microbiological angle -- bacteria and viruses. Small reactors would operate on energy from solar collectors, a technology that Matos hopes to apply in Maracaibo Lake (polluted by industrial development).

Source - Tierramerica

18. Argentina's New President Pushing Sugar-Mill Cleanup

FEB. 2008 - After a post-inaugural summer vacation, Argentine President Cristina Kirchner used her first official appearance of 2008 to propose a cleanup of the Sal-Dulce basin, one of Argentina's most important watersheds. Kirchner announced the initiative last month with the governors of the five provinces that share the 22,000-square-mile (57,000-sq-km) watershed-Catamarca, Csrdoaba, Salta, Santiago del Estero and Tucumn. The objective is to reduce pollution from Tucumn sugar mills and other plants blamed for harming water quality in Santiago del Estero's Ro Hondo reservoir. It calls for a watershed commission and incentives to induce plants to install pollution-control equipment.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

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Forests

19. Latin America: Deforestation Still Winning

FEB. 16, 2007 - Never before have Latin America and the Caribbean fought so hard against deforestation, say experts and government officials, but logging in the region has increased to the point that it has the highest rate in the world. Of every 100 hectares of forest lost worldwide between the years 2000 and 2005, nearly 65 were in Latin America and the Caribbean. In that period, the

average annual rate was 4.7 million hectares lost -- 249,000 hectares more than the entire decade of the 1990s. Deforestation remains difficult to deal with because there are many economic interests in play, according to Ricardo Snchez, director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The "Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development - 5 Years After Its Adoption" (ILAC) Report, prepared by UNEP, indicates that although forestry activity has maintained a positive performance in terms of improving productivity and advances in sustainable management and other practices, such as certification of sustainably harvested lumber, it has not prevented the loss of forests. According to the study, in some countries the shrinking of forested areas continues to be associated with an increase in livestock-raising and the classic model of expanding pasture area by cutting down forests.

Source - IPS News

10. Brazil: Pantanal Indians Threatened by Deforestation

FEB. 09, 2008 - The indigenous peoples of the central-western Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul must deal with a lack of land to grow crops and the destruction of the environment. The few communities lucky enough to have remaining forest land, face the threat of losing it. That is the case of those who live in the Mato Grosso Pantanal, a vast wetland ecosystem whose preservation is among Brazil's foremost environmental concerns. Forests in the settlement area of the Kadiweu are logged to feed the growing demand of the steel mill in Corumb, in the heart of the Pantanal, said

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Alessandro Menezes, head of Ecology and Action, a local non-governmental organization, in an interview with Tierramrica. The MMX Company, which since 2007 has been producing steel and pig iron in Corumb, has already faced threat of a forced closure for its use of illegal plant-based charcoal, but it continues to operate under a temporary judicial order. The needs of the Corumb iron and steel complex, made up of four large Brazilian or multi-national companies, far outstrip the available plant-based charcoal that can be produced by nearby plantation forestry initiatives, says Sonia Hess, professor at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul. As a result, nearly 3,500 tons of native trees are turned into charcoal each day. Let's discuss this one

Source - IPS News

11. Peru: "For Sale" Signs in Amazon Jungle

FEB. 5, 2008 - The Peruvian Congress is debating a draft law pushed by the government that would authorize the sale of vast tracts of deforested, uncultivated land in the Amazon jungle to private companies that invest in "reforestation" efforts. But critics say there is no land registry showing which natural areas could be sold off without hurting the region's rich biodiversity or affecting local residents who do not hold formal title to their land. Under the current law, areas authorized for reforestation are granted in concession. But President Alan Garca argues that if the land were sold to them instead, companies would enjoy greater security and more jobs would be created. The government's interest in selling off land in the Amazon jungle had already been announced by Garca in an op-ed piece in the local daily El Comercio. Experts argue that the president is focusing on profit and investment without taking into account the Amazon's great natural wealth or the local inhabitants of these areas, many of whom are indigenous people. Currently, oversight of reforestation initiatives and plantation forestry is carried out by the government agency Proinversisn, as if it were just another economic activity, instead of by a specialized body that could study the environmental, social and cultural aspects that should be taken into account when selling land in an area like the Amazon jungle. "The problem is that the draft law that the government has introduced does not clearly define what kind of land we are really talking about, because there is no land registry,"

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Luis Capella, the head of the non-governmental Peruvian Society on Environmental Law's forestry programme.

Source - IPS News

12. Colombian Court Throws Out Disputed Forestry Law

FEB. 2008 - Ruling in one of its most important environmental cases in years, Colombia's highest court has overturned a forestry law that critics said would open vast tracts of primary forests to commercial logging. The Jan. 23 decision by Colombia's Constitutional Court to throw out the 2006 General Law of Forestry marked a huge victory for a national coalition of Indian, Afro-Colombian and environmental organizations. The coalition had challenged the law, arguing it would endanger the country's 158 million acres (64 million has) of primary forest-nearly half of which belongs to Afro-Colombian and Indian groups. Ruling on largely procedural grounds, the court found that the government had violated Colombia's constitution by failing to consult with the affected communities about the forestry legislation. Green organizations, as well as Indian and Afro-Colombian advocacy groups, hailed the decision.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

13. Peru: Logging Firm Accused of Using Workers' Identities for Tax Fraud

JAN. 30, 2008 - Impoverished local residents of the Amazon jungle town of Orellana in Peru have filed a complaint against a logging company for using their identity documents to commit tax fraud in illegal timber sales worth more than 200,000 dollars. The affected workers say they took no part in the swindle and never saw any of the money, and accuse the Consorcio Maderero Company of hatching the entire scheme. The company holds one of the 240 logging concessions granted by the National Institute of National Resources' office on forestry and wildlife (Intendencia Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre) in a region which concentrates nearly half of all of the concessions awarded in the country. The Pacaya Samiria Nature Reserve, the most extensive area of flooded forest in Peru and one of the country's richest areas in flora and fauna, makes up six percent of the region

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of Loreto and 1.5 percent of the national territory. The chief economic activity in the region is logging, both legal and illegal.

Source - Tierramerica

Wildlife

14. Brazil Launches Extinction Initiative

FEB. 20, 2008 - In a pioneering effort to halt species extinction in the Brazilian Amazon, the state of Para is launching the Zero Extinction Program, the first of its kind in Brazil. The program, part of a decree signed February 20 in Belem by Para Governor Ana Julia Carepa identifies threatened species, key sites where they live and measures to protect and conserve these threatened habitats and species. A key element of the Par Zero Extinction Program is the compilation of a "red list" or list of threatened species, which includes 91 vertebrates, 37 invertebrates and 53 plant species. The initiative also calls for the creation of a formal structure for coordinating the Zero Extinction Program, composed of a management committee, a technical committee, the state's red list, and recovery plans for endangered species. It also recognizes Key Biodiversity Areas where listed species are found as priority regions for conservation and recovery efforts. "These innovative measures rank Para's legislation on endangered species as one of the most progressive and complete in the world," said Adrian Antonio Garda, director of the Amazon Program at Conservation International, one of the partners who created the Zero Extinction Program.

Source - OneWorld

Ecology

[15. Overfishing May Hurt Brazilian Pantanal Trees](#)

FEB. 5, 2008 - Overfishing is reducing the effectiveness of seed dispersal by fish in the Brazilian Pantanal, reports Nature. The

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research suggests that fishing practices can affect forest health. In the Pantanal many fish species feed on fallen fruit during the flood season. As waters recede and fish return to their low water habitats, seeds are dispersed over a large area. While scientists have long known that fish disperse seeds in the Amazon, the new research examined the importance of seed dispersal by pacu (*Piaractus mesopotamicus*), a common freshwater fish, for the tucum palm. The study, led by Mauro Galetti of Sao Paulo State University in Brazil, found that the tucum palm relies almost entirely on pacu services for seed dispersal. The findings hold ecological significance because populations of large paca are declining in the Pantanal due to a fisheries policy that protects pacu under 40 centimeters, but allows fishing of larger individuals.

Source - Mongabay

Antarctic Research

[16. Venezuela Helped by Uruguay Plans Antarctic Base](#)

FEB. 17, 2008 - Venezuelan scientists and military officers set out February 15 on their country's first expedition to Antarctica, leaving from Uruguay's capital Montevideo aboard the Uruguayan naval research ship "Oyarbide". The 45-day expedition, funded by Venezuela, became a controversial issue in Uruguay because the main opposition party claimed it was a step towards a military alliance with the government of President Hugo Chavez. Members of the opposition also objected to the presence of Venezuelan naval officers in a Uruguayan navy vessel and the alleged flying of the Venezuelan flag in Uruguay's Antarctic base once the mission arrives. However, Uruguay's congress, dominated by the ruling coalition, approved the mission and Uruguayan president Tabare Vazquez aides described the trip as a gesture of friendship. Venezuelan scientists will join their Uruguayan counterparts to study a range of subjects including sea bed topography, marine species and the effects of climate change in Antarctica. Uruguay, is a member of the Antarctic Treaty since 1980. Venezuela aspires to become a consultative member and hopes to establish a research station on the continent.

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HUB NOTE: Please refer to MONTEVIDEO 82 for a detailed report on this topic.

Source - MercoPress

[17. Brazilian President Commits Support for Antarctic Research](#)

FEB. 18, 2008 - Brazilian president Lula da Silva, overcome by emotion during his brief visit to the country's base in Antarctica, promised more resources for scientific research, according to the Brazilian press. According to the Brazilian news agency Globo Lula da Silva said it was "most important that more resources should be made available so as to have more possibilities of advancing research" such as those currently undertaken by Brazilian scientific and military staff. "We definitively need a larger lab than what we have now so our scientists can work more and in better conditions". The Brazilian government "has the resources, the money and the

political will to do so", he emphasized to the Brazilian media.

Source - MercoPress

Mercury

18. Peru: Scramble for Gold Scars Madre de Dios Region

FEB. 2008 - As prices of traded metals rise, small-scale "artisanal" mining, much of it unregulated, has grown in Peru. In 2006, according to official figures, artisanal miners produced 24 metric tons of gold worth US\$390 million. About 15 tons came from the Madre de Dios region, where some 35,000 people mine and only 2,000 possess formal title to claims. The rest of the miners are "informal," meaning they pay no taxes, have no set wages, receive no benefits and are not subject to oversight. Miners use mercury to process the gold, one-fourth of which is shared by the laborers and the rest of which goes to the claim holder. Based on the official annual gold production figure for the region-15 metric tons-and the 3-to-1 ratio of mercury to gold in the amalgamation process, miners use at least 45 tons of mercury annually in Madre de Dios. Carlos Villachica, director of Consulcont, an environmental and metallurgical consulting firm in Lima, calculates 30% of the mercury

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is lost by dumping in streams or on the ground during the first stage of the amalgamation. Miners recover some mercury, but unless the amalgam is heated in a retort, the rest-some 30%-enters the atmosphere, where miners breathe it or where it precipitates out onto trees, soil and crops. Heating the gold in retorts could recover most mercury, but many miners shun retorts, saying they discolor the gold. Villachica says this could be solved by using stainless steel retorts, but even if every miner used a retort that collected 80% of the mercury, three tons of the metal would still be vaporized every year. Villachica, once an artisanal miner, is developing a low-cost system that uses magnets to recover the gold and could allow the gold to be certified mercury-free.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

Energy

19. Brazil, Argentina Launch Energy Cooperation, but Natural Gas Negotiation Fails

FEB. 25, 2008 - President's Lula and Cristina Kirchner signed important agreements in the energy sector, including the construction of a binational hydroelectric power plant on the Uruguay River, the expansion of the electric transmission grid between the two countries, and the development of joint uranium enrichment and nuclear power generation technologies, reports correspondent Janes Rocha from Buenos Aires. Story also notes that a short-term problem overshadowed the important long term agreements: Argentina's need for more natural gas for next year's winter season.

Source - Public Affairs US Embassy Brasilia, original source Valor Economico

20. Peru Plans Renewable Energy Investment

FEB. 20, 2008 - The Ministry of Energy and Mines announced February 7 that it will present a portfolio of 35 projects in March during the meeting of the Energy Work Group of the Asia Pacific Economic

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Cooperation Forum (APEC), in Iquitos. The projects would require the investment US\$35 billion over 15 years. Most are still in the planning stage, to be developed in partnership with governments and

private enterprises. Deputy Minister of Energy, Pedro Gamio, stated that the goal is to reduce the commercial use of petroleum in Peru to 25 per cent of 2004 levels by 2011. Thus far the country has decreased petroleum use from 70 to 55 per cent of 2004 levels, mainly by increasing the use of gas. Fifteen of the projects are for hydropower. One, located in the Amazon, could generate as much as 7,550 megawatts, says Gamio, even though Peru requires just 350 megawatts a year. Other projects include wind, geothermic, solar and tidal power, as well as the development of a national solar map. A law on renewable energy - aiming to provide funding for research and encourage public and private companies to invest in development - was proposed to congress on 1 February and Gamio hopes it will be passed before the end of the month.

Source - SciDev

¶21. Brazil, French Guiana Cooperation includes Tackling Illegal Mining, Biofuels

FEB. 12, 2008 - Forging a military alliance between France and Brazil and curbing illegal activity over the Brazil-French Guiana border was the focus of talks between their two leaders. Presidents Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil and Nicolas Sarkozy of France also inaugurated the construction of a bridge linking Brazil with French Guiana -- a key project in developing the wild jungle area. The bridge between Brazil's Oiapoque town and Saint-Georges will be the first land border crossing for French Guiana and should be ready by 2010. The two leaders also discussed how to combat illegal gold mining and trafficking in the border region. Brazilian wild cat miners, often heavily armed, smuggle gold back over the border to Brazil and their mining operations inflict environmental damage in French Guiana. Biofuels, civilian nuclear cooperation as well as global trade talks were also on the agenda.

Source: Reuters

¶22. Colombia Ignores Pledge to Indians, Plans New Sin Dam

FEB. 2008 - For years, the Ember-Kato Indians fought plans by the
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Colombian government to build a 350-megawatt hydroelectric dam along the Sin River that would supply much-needed energy to the national grid, prevent winter flooding of the Sin Valley-and permanently inundate large expanses of farm and pastureland. When the 2,500-member tribe lost its battle in 1999 and the government built the US\$750 million Urr dam on the Sin, displacing hundreds of Ember and killing off 80% of their fishing resources, the Ember tried to find comfort in a promise: The government pledged in writing not to build a larger dam being planned, the 860-megawatt Urr II. Now the government seemingly has gone back on its word. It says it wants to proceed with Urr II, arguing dams not only will supply energy needed for the national grid, but also control winter rises of more than 24 feet in the Sin and flooding in the northern department of Csrdoaba.

Source - EcoAmericas (for complete article please contact Larissa Stoner)

Special Report: Increase in Deforestation Rate in Brazilian Amazon Sparks Government Action:

¶23. A report released January 23rd by the Brazilian Environmental Ministry pointed to an increase in Amazon deforestation during the last five months of 2007, following a declining trend observed over the past four years. Preliminary figures showed that destruction between August and December may have reached as many as 7,000 square kilometers, or the equivalent of 60 percent of the deforestation in the 12 months through July 2007. The following articles report on this disquieting news:

¶24. Brazil to Boost Penalties to Pare Amazon Devastation

FEB. 11, 2008 - Brazil's government plans to curb financing for illegal loggers and farmers and boost penalties to curtail deforestation of the Amazon, Environment Minister Marina Silva told reporters in Brasilia. Devastation in the Brazilian portion of the Amazon basin accelerated in the last five months of 2007, the

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ministry said last month. "There's no intention, at this point, to either give amnesty to deforestation offenders or to make the reserve limits more flexible," Silva said at the ministry's headquarters in Brasilia. "What is needed is better enforcement, not an easing in the current policies to protect the Amazon."

Source - Bloomberg

¶25. Brazil Mob Attacks Anti-Logging Agents in Amazon Region

FEB. 21, 2008 - A mob of 2,000 people burned tires, blocked roads and attacked federal agents who sought to crack down on illegal Amazon logging, but officials vowed Wednesday that riots would not halt law enforcement. Brazil's Environmental Protection Agency abandoned efforts to audit logging companies and sawmills suspected of illegal logging after mobs surrounded its workers and tried to invade a sawmill in a "public revolt" in the Amazonian town of Tailandia, the agency said on its Web site. The crackdown began February 14, when 130 environmental workers (from the Brazilian Federal Police and Brazil's environmental protection agency) began inspecting Tailandia's estimated 140 sawmills. Of 10 mills audited, five were fined for stocking lumber of unknown origin and for selling lumber without authorization, the environmental agency said. The agency seized 13,000 cubic meters (17,003 cubic yards) of illegal lumber, including top Brazilian hardwoods, enough to fill 640 trucks.

Source - IHT

¶26. Brazil Plans Fund to Help Finance Amazon Conservation

FEB 22, 2008 - Brazil's government plans to set up a donation-based fund to help finance conservation of the Amazon after illegal logging increased last year. The government is seeking to raise \$200 million from Norway* and corporate sources in the first year, said Tasso Azevedo, director of the country's forestry services. The fund, to be established in May, will seek to raise as much as \$1 billion annually to help slow deforestation of the Amazon. "Everybody says they want to help maintain the Amazon, but nobody has reached into their pockets until now," Azevedo told reporters in Brasilia. The fund creates an opportunity to help preserve an area that represents about half the world's remaining rainforest.

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*HUB Note: In a special address in the COP High-Level Meeting in Bali (December 2007), Prime Minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg announced more than US\$500 million annually to support efforts to reduce deforestation in developing countries.

Source - Bloomberg

¶27. Brazil Police Resume Crackdown on Amazon Logging

FEB. 24, 2008 - Heavily armed federal police swarmed the Amazonian town of Tailandia on Saturday February 23, seizing more than 500 truckloads of illegally cut hardwood that were previously confiscated but abandoned when rioting residents and loggers drove out environmental authorities. About 450 officers retook the town of Tailandia, patrolling on horseback and in pickup trucks and standing guard outside sawmills. (Refer to previous article "Mob Attacks Anti-Logging Agents").

Source - IHT

